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ORIGINAL CORRESPONDENCE.

Paris, March 1st.

It is stated here as positive, that Miss Smithson has been engaged for twelve representations in mute characters, at the *Opera Comique*, of the truth or falsehood of this statement, however, you will probably be a better judge than myself, as Miss Smithson is now playing in Dublin. M. Laurent, the present director of the Italian theatre, leaves at the close of the present season, but he retains the privilege of the German and English theatres, the latter is not likely to be of much service to him, as there is no prospect of sufficient encouragement being given to an English company, but the success which attended the German performers last year, has induced M. Laurent to engage another German company, who are to commence operations in April. In addition to the singers whom the Parisians have for some time been led to expect, Mr. Laurent informs us that he has engaged a lady of very extraordinary talent, whose services he has secured at a great pecuniary sacrifice, the name of this *prima donna* has not transpired. It is Mr. Laurent's intention, if possible, subsequently to take his German singers to London, and from thence to Dublin.

The following account of the late grand ball, for the benefit of the poor, has just been published in the *Moniteur*—the number of tickets sold was five thousand two hundred and sixty-one, at twenty francs each, producing 105,220, to which are added two thousand francs given by the Duke of Orleans, and the Duke de Chartres, and 22,000 francs in different donations, and an extra price paid for the gentlemens tickets: the expenses, after deducting four thousand francs paid towards them by the king, amounted to 14,000 francs, so that about 117,000 francs were realised for the object of the charity.

It was mentioned some time ago, that a scheme had been formed by Count Alexander de Laborde, for completing the education of young men in a course of travels, the pupils under this plan have already visited Turin, Genoa, Florence and Rome, and their progress in languages, arts and sciences, is very highly spoken of.

Some interesting discoveries in sculptures were made a short time ago, in a house on the *Quai des Bernardins*, they consist of several beautiful bas-reliefs, and other subjects from the chisel of the celebrated Goujon, and bear the date of 1557, several of these sculptures have been purchased by the government for the museum. It appears by letters from New York, received at Havre de Grace, that the cold in America has been much more intense than in Europe: in Philadelphia and New York, in the beginning of February, nine persons were frozen to death during one night.

The want of money or spirit, has lately tended very much to check the building speculations which were going on in Paris, but it is probable that some activity will be displayed in the spring; at present the only building of importance in course of progress, is a bazaar in the Rue Montesquieu: this is a most splendid affair, the pillars and most of the roof are of iron beautifully worked, and the dome, which is of glass, will be the largest ever erected for a building of this description.

London, March 2nd.

No works of great consequence have appeared since my last letter, but there are several which are entitled to notice, I would mention particularly Mr. Murray's 11th No. of the Family Library, and Mr. Valpy's third volume of the Family Classical Library, the latter of these, which contains Xenophon's account of, and comment's on the expedition of Cyrus, is a very clever and faithful translation, perhaps no writer among the Athenians, displayed a more chaste style, and more correct views than Xenophon; and it is very creditable to the translator of this work, to state that he has performed his task with great skill, having preserved all the simplicity and elegance of the original, while at the same time he has adapted it to the genius of our own language, No. 11. of the Family Library.—The life of Columbus abridged by Mr. Washington Irving from his own larger work, is very cleverly done, and I am not surprised at hearing that the sale has already proved very considerable. The periodicals for the month do not exhibit any very striking features, but on looking at them collectively, one cannot but be struck with the important improvements which this sort of literature has undergone within the last few years. The only new Magazine upon an extensive plan started this year, is that of Mr. Frazer. It is something between what the New Monthly is, and the London Magazine used to be, but unfortunately there is in the second number the same affectation of superiority which was apparent in the first. Mr. Power's new novel, called the Lost Heir, has had so large a sale, that the publisher has urged him to write another, but this gentleman has prudently refused to accept the invitation, feeling that it is better to wait until the fit comes upon him, than to write against inspiration.

I mentioned in my last letter, that there was very little prospect of Mr. Gurney's steam carriage starting at the proposed period, and that a patent had been taken for a new power, I have since ascertained, that this power is derived from a compound of sulphur, charcoal, and two other ingredients, which are not named, from which a vapour of such great force and quantity is obtained, that a tea-spoonful of fluid heated to 100 deg. less than boiling water, will give sufficient to raise a ton of water; the patentee of this discovery has made several experiments, from which it would appear that a very small boiler would be sufficient to impel a carriage of considerable weight, and that no addition to the fuel or fluid, that yields the vapour, would be required during a very long journey, as the vapour does not escape, but repeats its work several times, passing too and from the same cylinder: the patentee is a gentleman of high rank in the army, and is not likely to have deceived himself as to the capabilities of his new power, but really the thing seems so extraordinary, that one cannot but be sceptical until it is seen in actual operation.

In the theatrical world, there is little new to notice. Miss Kemble continues to attract really overflowing audiences, and on the nights of Miss Paton's performances, the boards are respectfully attended at Drury Lane, the illness of Kean, who this time is not affecting indisposition, and that of Madam Vestris, have materially injured the interests of the theatre. Indeed, I am sorry to say, that this concern is

not now in a flourishing state, and it is generally understood, that the present lessee will retire at the close of the season. Elliston, who has made and spent several fortunes, is now doing well at the Surrey theatre, although it has degenerated within the last few months, almost to what it was before he took it. The old gentleman seldom visits the theatre, being much confined by indisposition to his own house in the vicinity, where he practises the hospitality of his most prosperous days.

London, 2d.

We London folk have been vastly pleased with your "Dublin Literary Gazette," although in good sooth we have something to complain of in one of your early numbers. Why, in the name of all that is bright and beautiful, should your "Junior Pentagonal" assail us, merely because our streets are longer, greater in number, and more bustling than your own? And why become querulous of the distance between Islington and Sloane-street—or to speak more properly, between Sloane-street and Islington? What dweller of the West End would know an Islingtonian, or ever think of passing beyond Temple-bar? The double Goth!—let him go and live at Islington, or Constantinople, or any other Eastern land, at once—and not intrude upon us again such strange stories of his muddy and murky perambulations.

Every lover of the Arts still sorrows for the loss of Lawrence, and longs for the forthcoming life by Campbell. You may imagine that all are not equally pleased with you, at the election of your talented countryman, Shee, as his successor in the Academy. Pickersgill paints female portraits with exquisite grace and delicacy—but not female portraits only; his glorious likeness of Jeremy Bentham, in the last exhibition, will long be remembered by all who know how to value fine colouring; Wilkie is unrivalled in his particular style of art; Howard is a tasteful and elegant artist; and Jackson, perhaps, the most faithful delineator of masculine features amongst them all. Our British artists may rival any school in Europe; and there is much splendid talent developing every day. Lawrence was a magnificent head to such a body: his fine manly countenance—his bland and perfect manners—his uniform and judicious munificence—his domestic virtues—and his public character, were such as to make us all proud of the noble-minded President. His Sovereign pronounced him the most finished gentleman of the day; and the widows and orphans of many deceased artists knew him as a ministering angel. It is rather singular that his last effort should have been to immortalize the young and gifted Kemble. It is not, perhaps, generally known to you wild Hirish, that he was undyingly attached to a daughter of Mrs. Siddons; the object of his affections sunk into an early grave, but her faithful lover never forgot her, though many splendid and lovely women would gladly have bestowed their hands and fortunes on the accomplished president. You will be glad to hear (that is, supposing you to possess pure and unadulterated patriotism,) that we have a noble painter from your island, in the person of Mr. Rothwell; he is universally designated "the Irish Lawrence," and bids fair to eclipse all our veterans now, in the delineation of female beauty. Sir Thomas augured most favourably of his extraordinary talents, and we understand, that at a price calculated

to astonish your impoverished ears, he has over ninety commissions; his works have attracted the attention of Wellington, Peel, and other grandees. At present he is perfectly free from affectation, bland and gentleman-like in his manners; an especial favourite with the fair sex; that last is enough to spoil any man—*mais nous verrons!*

Have you got any phrenologists amongst you, of the west? it is quite extraordinary how that mania, (I beg its pardon,) *science* is gaining ground here. One gentleman of our acquaintance never inquires the character of his servants, but feels their heads. Another—(a terrible jilt by the way,) pays attention—exclusive attention—to one pretty girl or another, until he discovers some unamiable bump. The other night we encountered Doctor Vimont, the famous French phrenologist, and his box of drawings, illustrative of the science, which accompanies him wherever he goes; it is quite a *galante shew-concern*, “Dere you may see de heads of the mice, little niblin innocent tings, wid de great organ, called acquisitive ness—de heads of de tiger, grand, magnifique! fine develope! de organ of de destruct et combat! head of de young ladie—oh! mon dieu! (shrug) melody, gaiety, benevolence, ideality—*et un peu d'amour!*” Vimont is really civil to the sex; but there is another person—an ogre of a man, with huge staring moonlike eyes, and, altogether a ferocious countenance, who is the *detesté* of the better part of the creation: this monster (at the same party,) fixed his evil gaze upon a young and lovely girl, one who seemed sent upon earth to shew what beauty was; a creature of life and light with a lofty brow, and an eye flashing high and great imaginings. We thought the Caliban for once had soul, and was admiring this perfect stamp of immortality. “She is, indeed, lovely,” we exclaimed—“the finest frontal development I ever saw,” growled forth the phrenological fiend, slowly withdrawing his leaden orbs, and fixing them on the devoted head, “I would gladly at this moment give fifty pounds for her skull!!” Angels and ministers of grace defend us!

I see you are to have the Kembles soon; you will be delighted with Fanny, when she shows forth in your Dublin Metropolis; she has *mind* and taste enough for any thing. L. E. L. they say is writing a novel. By the bye, I think you do not appreciate our English Sappho, as she deserves; when do you mean to review her last poems? She is an extraordinary girl, unspoiled by the world's flatteries. I wish I could shew her “bodily” to you of Dublin, for an Irishman told me the other day, that you presumed to call her *ugly!* Ugly indeed! the best possible sign that you know nothing about her—voyons donc. Listen lively lordlings all. Letitia Elizabeth Landon is certainly under what is denominated the middle size; slight, and exquisitely formed, with a hand and arm that Jove might swear by; a snowy skin, and on her cheek, a faint colouring, a pinky tint, which we grieve to say, tells almost too plainly of a delicate constitution; her brow is finely formed; her eyes quick and sparkling; her nose *retroussé*; her mouth and chin not well proportioned, but singularly flexible and expressive; her conversation is lively and sparkling, and as it applies to persons and things in general, unstentatiously shews an extraordinary knowledge of mankind, and an acquaintance with the world.

She possesses three of the necessary requisites for a novelist, in a superior degree—taste, tact, and talent; that quick talent which seizes on every thing, likely to turn to advantage, or procure the end it has in view. She dances with grace and spirit, and is much attached to that amusement; from the liveliness she evinces in society, you would never suppose her the author of the *Impassioned Improvisatrice*; but it is not for her outward bearing; nor even the talent which ranks her with the first poets of the age, that we admire, ('tis a cold English word to express what we feel, but it must do,) L. E. L.; we admire and respect the lady for her private worth; for her excellent virtues, in every situation of life; for her total freedom from affectation, and for the kindness of her heart, “which is ever open as day to melting charity.”

We will, if you please, enlighten you upon the subject of all our *literati* in some future papers; adhering strictly to the truth—“nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice”—perhaps next time we may treat of the Mitford, that excellent and amiable woman, at once the most comic, and perhaps the best tragic writer of the age.

Yours, as you demean yourself,
Puss in the corner.

[C. M. N. Ed. Ebl. Lit. Cens. principi Societatis Pentagonae, nobilissimo, honoratissimo, admodum eruditio, S. P. D.]

Tandem tibi, amice dulcissime, in manus traditur haec disceptatiuncula, tuis jussis suscepta, de cultu, et studiis humanitatis ac literarum. Eam velim te lectore esse dignam, attamen, qualcumque sit, “pignus amoris” et observantiae, benigne accipe. Si me festinante, vel insciente, aliquid lapsum fuerit, ut mihi veniam des, obsecro, (ita enim humana fuit,) atque rectius “candidus impertias,” si autem, quod Deos oro, tibi plura arrideant,

“His utere mecum.”]

ON THE CULTIVATION OF CLASSICAL LITERATURE IN IRELAND.

In the “March of Intellect,” Classical Literature, if not flaming in the van, has at least not darkened in the rear, and although *haud possitis aequis* may characterize the relation between its progress and that of Science, yet it has not stood still. Science within these latter years has taken gigantic strides—its improvements have not been confined to mere theory, or the mode of investigating abstract questions; they have been applied with unparalleled success to the promotion of the comforts and conveniences of mankind. Nor is it strange that a country like Great Britain, whose interests are so identified with improvements in machinery, and increased facilities of commercial intercourse, should feel a preference for that branch of human knowledge, which can furnish her with the means of attaining both these objects. The desire, moreover, which is almost coeval with our birth, of discovering the causes which produce effects, gives us a natural taste for scientific pursuits, which although it may not be sufficiently cultivated to lead us to engage in them ourselves, yet seldom fails to produce admiration of the successful prosecution of them in others. But whilst we admit the propriety of the taste for scientific information, which cha-

racterises the age, let us not be unmindful of the interests of Classical Literature. It is true, that such information cannot minister to the animal comforts of man—it is equally true, that all the knowledge which a student could acquire of the remains of antiquity, would never enable him to construct a steam engine, or invent a safety lamp, but as a source of intellectual enjoyment, Classical Literature yields to no subject of human study. As long as there is a desire in the mind of enquiring into the events of past ages, as long as poetry can charm, or eloquence persuade—as long as men feel the necessity of forming their taste, or cultivating their judgment, the classic models will be examined, and studied. But the spirit of our times requires that he who would raise the standard for the cause of Classical Literature, must place it on a higher ground than that of mere intellectual enjoyment. Public opinion cannot be resisted, and I must needs obey with the modesty which besets an apologist.

Luckily, however, this knotty point has been already considered, and the utility of Classical Literature successfully maintained, in various essays on the prize question proposed by one of our learned bodies, (the Royal Irish Academy,) “Whether and how far the cultivation of science, and that of Polite Literature assist or obstruct each other?” Although, therefore, I have no intention of serving up again the arguments of the ingenious authors of these essays, as I know too well how unpalatable the *crambe repetita* is, I must say, that in this question, the opposers of classical education appear to me to have altogether forgotten, in their calculation of its value, the present state of society. Like the Platonists of former days, they must form a new world for themselves, for they cannot live in that, which we inhabit in the present year of grace, 1830, unless indeed they find some convenient planet, to enact the fulcrum for a lever whereby they may turn the world upside down. But until this more than Herculean task be accomplished, we must consider the world as it is, and not as it might be. In the present state of things, we converse in a language, a great part of whose words are derived from classic sources, and the proper application of which frequently depends on a knowledge of their primitive meaning—the phraseology and illustrations of our common conversation are tinged with classic colouring—our authors teem with quotations or allusions, to the uninitiated altogether obscure or at best but partially known—our terms of science are cast in the Grecian moulds—the paintings which adorn our walls are frequently of classic subjects—our common coins have the stamp of antiquity—and as we walk our streets, and gaze at the columns of our public buildings, nay, the pillars, which decorate our shops, we look on the imitations, however poor, of Roman and Grecian models. I will not stop here to enter into sage conjectures of what the state of things would be, were the anti-classicists to obliterate all vestiges of Ancient Literature and Arts, although I have a shrewd guess that the Satirist's description of the altered state of the grove of Egeria would not be inapplicable,

Ejectis mendicat silva canæris.
But the cause of classical education requires no such hypothetical arguments to support it, for the world is too old now to be ashamed of its years, it can talk without compunction of the affairs of its younger days, and even has a predilection for profiting by the experience of